

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED SUPPRESSION OF *ELIPESURUS*
SPINICAUDA SCHOMBURGK (PISCES). Z.N.(S.) 1825

(see volume 24, pages 353–355)

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Castex (1968) has petitioned that the names *Elipesurus* Schomburgk, 1843, and *E. spinicauda* Schomburgk, 1843, based on a South American freshwater elasmobranch, be suppressed for the purposes of the Law of Priority and placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Names in Zoology. This request stems from the belief that *Elipesurus spinicauda* is identical with *Potamotrygon brachyurus* Günther, 1880 (Castex, 1966b), a species otherwise unknown from the Amazon basin; application of the senior synonym would substitute a little-known generic name for the widely used and familiar *Potamotrygon* Garman, 1877, that enters significantly into physiological literature.

Garman (1913) and Castex (1966a) recognized three genera of South American freshwater rays: *Elipesurus*, known from Schomburgk's account and figure of a specimen 18 inches long from Rio Branco, Fort San Joaquim [sic; Joachim, p. 130], Brazil; *Disceus* Garman (1877), monotypic, Amazonian; and *Potamotrygon* Garman (1877), with several species, ranging from Colombia to Argentina. *Elipesurus spinicauda* Schomburgk, 1843, was rather well illustrated and described, has a precise type locality, and should be placeable. Castex's studies of large numbers of South American rays have been centered in the southern waters of the continent, outside the range of *Disceus thayeri* Garman. My limited field experience with this group, as participant in an American Museum of Natural History expedition in 1964, was in the Rio Guaporé, [= Rio Iténez] of the Madeira system, along the border between Bolivia and Brazil. There I took three species of stingrays, two of *Potamotrygon* and *Disceus thayeri*. The latter is common, attains a large size, and undergoes notable change with age.

My findings, being published elsewhere, interpret Schomburgk's *Elipesurus spinicauda* as a mutilated, moderate-sized individual of the same species that was named *Trygon strogilopterus* Schomburgk, 1843, in the same work, on the basis of a small juvenile. Under the prerogative of first reviser I select the name *spinicauda*. Both nominal species are the same as *Disceus thayeri* Garman (1913), which name therefore becomes a subjective junior synonym of *Elipesurus spinicauda* Schomburgk. Crucial to the association of *E. spinicauda* with *thayeri* rather than with a species of *Potamotrygon* are the great development (with age) of strong dermal spines, irregularly disposed about the base of the tail; the complete coverage of the pelvic fins by the pectoral disk; the absence of an anterior median prominence on the disk; and the slender and abruptly tapering tail, which lacks the poison spine—surely from mutilation. Schomburgk's figure of *Trygon strogilopterus* well illustrates the slender tail and the proximity of the poison spine to the disk, distinctive features of *Elipesurus* (= *Disceus*). This placement of *Elipesurus* removes it from competition with *Potamotrygon*, which may be retained for the larger, better-known genus of the Potamotrygoninae (family Dasyatidae). I agree with Garman (1877 : 210) and with Castex (1968) that *Paratrygon* Duméril, 1865, based on the *Aiereba* Marcgrave, 1648, is best considered a nomen dubium.

In view of the above I believe it inadvisable for the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to support items 8(1), 8(4), and 8(5), dealing with *Elipesurus spinicauda*, of Castex's request. I support items 8(2), 8(3), and 8(6) dealing with *Potamotrygon*, *P. hystrix*, and the Potamotrygonidae, but note that the gender of *Potamotrygon* is feminine.

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COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED VALIDATION OF *MACACA FUSCATA* (BLYTH, 1875) AS THE NAME FOR THE JAPANESE MACAQUE. Z.N.(S.) 1802

(see volume 24, pages 250–251)

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We have pleasure in supporting Dr. Jack Fooden's application for the conservation of the name *Macaca fuscata* (Blyth, 1875) for the Japanese macaque.

This necessitates the suppression of the name *Macaca speciosa* I. Geoffroy, 1826, and many people working with the brown stump-tailed macaque may feel a reasonable annoyance at the change of its scientific name from *Macaca speciosa* to *Macaca arctoides*, the next available name. However, changes such as this come about through the thorough and conscientious work of modern revisers who, in tracing and eliminating past errors, are providing a sound basis for the future.

As other primate genera are revised, other name changes may become necessary; in dealing with this Order, the first consideration is that these changes should be minimized so that communication between workers using the animals concerned is not needlessly hampered. In deciding how best to deal with the misidentification of the type specimen of *Macaca speciosa* I. Geoffroy, 1826, by Blyth (1875) and many later authors, Dr. Fooden has had this end in view.

We therefore have pleasure in supporting his application.

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSAL TO SUPPRESS *PYTHON TIMORENSIS* MÜLLER, 1844. (REPTILIA). Z.N.(S.) 1834

(see volume 25, pages 55–59)

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The case as presented is convincing. I endorse all requests pertaining to it, without reservation. It should be pointed out, however, that Article 58 specifies in para. (11) that geographical names differing only in suffix spelling *-ensis* vs. *-iensis* “(e.g. *timorensis*, *timoriensis*)” are to be regarded as homonyms, thus rendering unnecessary a separate and explicit action on the erroneous subsequent spelling of *Python timorensis* Müller, 1844 (e.g. *P. timoriensis* Müller, 1857) or of *Liasis timoriensis* Peters, 1876 (e.g. *P. timorensis* (Boulenger, 1893)).